

Canadian Inuit for that matter) had experienced. Bringing together large numbers of Inuit from different camps who were no longer dependent upon one another for survival or social support resulted in a figuration characterized by an increasing frequency of non-conforming behaviours (as defined by both Euro-Canadian and traditional Iglulingmiut standards). The author's conversation with a young Inuk describing how to render Lysol into a drinkable liquid will strike many readers with northern experience as all too familiar. I found this chapter the most interesting, since it allowed me to make direct comparisons with the western central arctic community where I have been working for the past 17 years. Nonspecialists and experienced northern researchers alike will find this section an excellent synthesis of court records, RCMP offense data, and interviews with local residents regarding issues of social control, order, and non-conformity. Regrettably, space does not allow a thorough review and commentary on this section of the book. Although I disagreed with a number of Rasing's observations and conclusions, I felt that he did an excellent job in pulling together an impressive amount of material upon which to base his comments.

The book has a number of very minor irritations. The author relied quite heavily on footnotes, many of which I felt could have been incorporated into the text. While I appreciated the extensive citation and elaboration provided by the footnotes, it did interfere with the flow of reading the main text. There were also a substantial number of typographical errors in the text, and I could not find several cited works in the bibliography. More annoying was the fact a number of direct, and relatively long, quotes in French were not translated for the benefit of non-French-reading individuals.

Another minor criticism is that the author did not convince me that the figurational perspective really offered a different view of social change in Iglulingmiut society than that which could be attained simply by using a more traditional culture concept. Many of the changes that Rasing discusses have been described by other researchers, all of whom are cited and discussed in the text. Nevertheless, Rasing does an excellent job of pulling together his own exhaustive data with the observations of others. I also take issue with the comment on the last page, made perhaps in a moment of non-reflection, wherein Rasing notes that increasing social differentiation and integration led to civilization and state formation in northwestern Europe (according to Elias 1978, 1982), but that contact with the outside world appears to have had the reverse influence—a “decivilization process”—among the Iglulingmiut. While one cannot doubt that incorporation into the Canadian nation state has brought a host of significant social problems, to characterize these as representative of a “decivilizing process” is somewhat misdirected. Aside from the fact that the civilizing or decivilizing processes are never fully explained, the reader is left to wonder what, if any, parallels exist between the Iglulingmiut over the past 150 years of their history and the state formation period in northwestern Europe. A more apt comparison would be with the contact experiences of other small-scale, kin-based

societies within expansionist nation states.

Nevertheless, I found this to be a superbly researched and well-organized work by a promising young scholar. Individual points can be debated, as they should be, but this monograph will be an excellent addition to courses in legal anthropology and contemporary arctic ethnography.

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POLAR PIONEERS: JOHN ROSS AND JAMES CLARK ROSS. By M.J. ROSS. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994. 435 p., 26 illus., 22 maps, glossary of place-names, notes, bib., index. Hardbound. Cdn\$34.95.

The history of Western exploration of the Arctic and Antarctic continues to fascinate both the general reader and the more zealous student of the past. This book will satisfy both. Much has already been written about the exploits of John Ross and his nephew James Clark Ross. Few books dealing with the history of exploration of the Canadian Arctic and Greenland lack the illustration of John Ross's meeting with the Polar Eskimos (ancestors of the present-day Inughuit) near Cape York in 1818. The distinguished career of James Clark Ross and his impressive voyages in both polar regions have also been properly acclaimed, and I wouldn't consider either man to be an “unsung and forgotten hero” as suggested on the book jacket. What makes this work particularly interesting is the author's familiarity with his subjects. M.J. Ross, the great-grandson of James Clark Ross, takes the reader on a number of interesting excursions into the more or less private lives of the two heroes.

The book opens with a fairly short and not altogether smooth historical account of the Galloway branch of the “Ross clan,” aided luckily by a schematic family tree that unfortunately ends in the middle of the nineteenth century. What follows is a most interesting account of John Ross's early naval career, which began when he was nine years old. To describe it as a tough life would be an understatement. It was a time when the British navy was repeatedly engaged in war. In fact, it is quite remarkable that John Ross lived to see the Arctic. He was wounded in both legs, wounded in the head, bayoneted right through his body and had both legs and an arm broken.

The subsequent wounds pension was well-deserved. That he was physically fit for the strenuous years in Arctic exploration says a lot about his toughness and perseverance.

In comparison, his nephew's naval career was considerably different; difficult and dangerous at times to be sure, but perhaps somewhat less traumatic. At the age of forty, John Ross had already seen over thirty years of service when he was appointed to lead the 1818 expedition in search of the Northwest Passage, something to occupy the British navy following the end of the Napoleonic wars. He had taken on his nephew, James, as first class volunteer when the young man was barely twelve years old. In most ways John Ross's 1818 Arctic expedition was a fateful affair for both uncle and nephew. John Ross's failure to penetrate deeper into Lancaster Sound because he judged it blocked by distant mountains brought him considerable discredit within the Admiralty when the passage was penetrated by his second-in-command, William Parry, the following year. James, on the other hand, accompanied Parry on all his subsequent expeditions and the two became lifelong friends. The expeditions gained him another close friend, Francis Crozier, who, years later, served as second-in-command on the ill-fated Franklin expedition. The author provides an excellent account of the years that James Ross served with Parry, including the less well-known episode north of Spitzbergen in 1827, when Parry made his one and only attempt to reach the North Pole. In the fall of 1993 I climbed to the top of the little Rosøya (Ross Island), one of northernmost of the Seven Island group in Spitzbergen, named by Parry in honour of James Ross. The large stone cairn from 1827 was perfectly intact.

The reader is provided with a superb spectator view of the nasty infighting within the Admiralty itself and between various cliques of ambitious navy men. On top of the list of spiteful and vicious quarrels were those between John Ross and the arrogant and despotic Secretary to the Admiralty, John Barrow. The feud between these two men took on epic proportions and lasted a lifetime. It obviously delighted Barrow to favour James Ross, particularly during the many times when the relationship between the two Rosses was strained. Quite obviously John Ross harboured conflicting emotions about his increasingly more famous nephew—an odd mixture of admiration and resentment.

One gets a sense of those ambivalent emotions when, after years of bitter discourse with William Parry and John Barrow (and more indirectly with James) over the Lancaster Sound 'affair,' John Ross still invites his nephew to join him on yet another search for the Northwest Passage. James accepted and came to play a key role in what turned out to be an epic, four-year struggle for survival in the central Arctic. The geographical discoveries reported from this expedition included the location, by James, of the magnetic North Pole. One of his sled trips took James to the west coast of what later proved to be an island. Little did he know that the final scenes of the Franklin disaster and his friend Crozier's life would be played out along that shore a little over a decade later.

Whereas John's other passions included the promotion of steam propulsion, phrenology and sketching (he was an

excellent artist), James became increasingly involved with studies of magnetic variations, a particularly thorny problem for global maritime navigation. In large measure, it was that interest which led James to the Antarctic, where he commanded a brilliant voyage of exploration which included scientific studies of terrestrial magnetism, oceanography and marine zoology. For the reader familiar with the history of Arctic exploration, the Antarctic voyage of James Ross offers many tantalizing and fateful reminders of things to come. The ships used by James Ross were the *Erebus* and the *Terror*. James's friend Crozier was the captain of the *Terror*, and in Tasmania they met up with Franklin, unhappily serving as Governor of the remote territory.

The Antarctic voyage was a huge success that included the first penetration of the Antarctic pack ice and the discovery of the Ross Sea. It would be the first and last time ships navigated the Ross Sea under sail alone. James returned to many honours and a hero's welcome in England. He even accepted the knighthood he had refused on an earlier occasion, much to the bewilderment of friends and the establishment. He also returned to his fiancée who, together with her family, was fairly determined he should remain closer to home. Whether it was such a promise made or simply the fact that he had seen enough ice-filled waters to last a lifetime, the author doesn't say.

In spite of repeated requests from the Admiralty, James declined the offer to lead another naval expedition in search of the Northwest Passage. The build-up to the fateful 1845 expedition includes many pieces of interesting background information, including letters written to the hydrographer Francis Beaufort. In these, James not only declined the offer to lead the expedition, but also stressed that in any case he wanted nothing to do with ships fitted as steamers, as was the plan for the *Erebus* and *Terror*. Instead, James supported the ambitions of John Franklin (and Lady Franklin) while also urging his old friend Crozier to join the expedition, a move which must later have caused him moments of deep regret.

Publications dealing with various aspects of the search for Franklin take up a lot of library shelf space. Yet, M.J. Ross manages to give the reader new insights into the many interactive plays surrounding the Franklin search. A good account is given of both the people with useful ideas that no one listened to, such as John Ross, Richard King, George Back, Dr. John Rae and Dr. John Richardson, and the less-than-brilliant ideas that got most of the attention. In all of this, one cannot help but question some of the activities of James Ross, especially during the first search expedition. Whether intentionally or not, the author leaves the reader with the impression that James was somewhat less than enthusiastic about participating in the Franklin search, even though one of the missing men was his friend Francis Crozier. It is the same feeling of detachment in James that one gets when reading about all the problems facing his father. Something about James's character, even before the Antarctic voyage, remains obscure and unexplained: his first refusal of a knighthood; his refusal to lead the Northwest Passage expedition; and his perhaps somewhat lacklustre rescue attempt in 1848–1849.

That may be an unfair assessment and one leaning too much on hindsight and the frustration of knowing how close James came to reaching the Franklin ships and how close other field parties came to Beechey Island, where at least some of the pieces of the puzzle could have been found. It's the nagging frustration many readers of Arctic exploration feel about the Franklin expedition: why hadn't they left records of their progress or depots for retreat purposes? Why didn't Crozier head north? Why didn't James push harder, go farther? Perhaps the author comes close enough to answering the last question when he suggests that few people understood just how much the long string of remarkable and often hazardous expeditions had taken out of James Ross. Nothing like that cooled his old uncle's enthusiasm! John Ross, one of the few who had urged Franklin to leave messages and retreat depots, launched his own expedition in the *Felix*, and joined a small armada of rescue ships in Lancaster Sound. His efforts added little to the search, and eventually he returned home from what would be his last Arctic expedition.

The last two chapters are devoted to the closing years of John, his brother George and James Ross. The information about George is interesting, although it is perhaps the apparent non-involvement of James in his father's troublesome affairs that is more remarkable. At the end of the book one has gained a good impression of the characters of John and James Ross. One cannot help a feeling of sympathy for the restless, rambunctious self-promoter, John, who, more often than not was the author of his own misfortunes and his bitter fights with the establishment. In strong contrast, James was the darling of the same establishment, the one who always appeared to do things right, a solid member of the inner circle. Not to take anything away from him—he was courageous, not afraid to stand on principles, and a masterful navigator. Was he a little more than embarrassed, perhaps even ashamed, by his family connections?

My only criticism with the book has to do with the editing, which should have caught some rather disjointed passages of text and the occasional spelling error. A greater number of detailed maps would also have benefited the reader. Nevertheless, the book is an altogether engaging and informative work and an enjoyable read. I highly recommend it to anyone interested in the history of exploration in the polar regions.

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